

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
South Plains District Veterinary Command
North Texas Branch
Fort Hood, TX 76544

FH-VTF-03

17 FEB 2009

SUBJECT: Medical Care for Privately Owned Animals

1. **PURPOSE:** To set guidelines for the medical care of privately owned animals at Fort Hood VTF.
2. **APPLICABILITY:** Applies to all Fort Hood VTF personnel. The Officer-In-Charge (OIC), VTF is responsible for maintaining and updating this SOP and for compliance with directives set forth herein. This SOP will be initially approved by the VTF OIC and annually reviewed by the Chief, North Texas Branch Veterinary Services.
3. **REFERENCES:**
 - a. AR 40-905 – Veterinary Health Services
 - b. III CORPS & FH REG 40-5 – Authorized Veterinary Care and Animal Control Program
 - c. Veterinary Command (VETCOM) Policy Memorandum – Privately Owned Animal (POA) Vaccinations – 5 December 2005
 - d. American Heartworm Society 2005 Guidelines for the Diagnosis, Prevention, and Management of Heartworm Infection in Dogs and Cats
4. **PROCEDURES:**
 - a. Routine Care:
 - (1) Thoroughly examine each POA before vaccinating. This includes:
 - (a) Weight
 - (b) Temperature, pulse, and respiration
 - (c) General appearance (temperament, attitude, and behavior)
 - (d) Evaluate eyes, ears, nose, mouth (teeth), skin (haircoat), anus, abdomen, and genitalia
 - (2) Obtain history from the client on each POA. This includes:
 - (a) Health status (vomiting, diarrhea)
 - (b) Allergies (vaccination reactions)
 - (c) Medications (heartworm prevention, flea control, deworming)
 - (d) Vaccination status
 - (e) Aggressive behavior
 - b. Vaccination protocol:
 - (1) Rabies vaccine – inject 1ml subcutaneously over the lower right leg of dogs or cats when 3 months of age or older. In cats, perform this injection as distally over the femur as possible. Inject 2mls

intramuscularly in right side of neck of horses when 3 months of age or older. Revaccinate annually for all species.

(2) Canine distemper/parvovirus combination vaccine – Beginning at six weeks of age, dogs should be vaccinated every three weeks until reaching 16 weeks of age (ideally at weeks 6, 9, 12, and 16.) Dogs LESS than 12 weeks old will be vaccinated with the DHPP-CV vaccine (no lept.) Dogs OVER 12 weeks old will be vaccinated with the DHLPP-CV vaccine. If primary vaccination is performed after 16 weeks of age, one booster vaccine is required three weeks after primary vaccination. Both DHPP-CV and DHLPP-CV are administered by injecting 1mL subcutaneously over the right scapula. Annual revaccination is required.

(3) FVRCP vaccine – Beginning at nine weeks of age, cats should be vaccinated every three weeks until reaching 16 weeks of age (ideally at weeks 9, 12, and 16.) If primary vaccination is performed after 16 weeks of age, one booster vaccine is required three weeks after primary vaccination. Vaccination is performed by injecting 1mL subcutaneously over the right scapula. Annual revaccination is required.

(4) Bordetella vaccine

Intranasal – instill 1ml (or less depending on manufacturer) into the nostrils of dogs at least 3 weeks of age or older. Annual revaccination is recommended.

Injectable – inject 1ml subcutaneously over the left scapula of dogs 8 weeks of age or older. If the dog has not been previously vaccinated, one booster vaccine must be administered three weeks after primary vaccination. Revaccinate annually thereafter.

**ENSURE THAT THE APPROPRIATE VACCINE IS
ADMINISTERED BY THE APPROPRIATE ROUTE!**

Intranasal vaccinations given subcutaneously may cause abscess formation.

(5) Feline Leukemia vaccine – use the Vet Jet (see attachment 1 for instructions) and administer in the lower left leg of cats 9 weeks of age or older. Administer this vaccine as distally over the femur as possible. If the cat has not been previously vaccinated, revaccinate with a second dose 3 after primary vaccination. Revaccinate annually thereafter. **Testing for leukemia is required prior to initial vaccination.**

(6) In order to facilitate monitoring for vaccine-associated sarcomas, all vaccines will be given in the locations described previously unless otherwise directed by a veterinarian. If directed to administer a vaccine at a different site, ensure that this is annotated in the patient record along with the location in which the vaccine was administered.

(7) If an animal presenting for vaccinations has evidence of systemic disease, is pregnant, has a history of vaccine reactions, or is a non-nursing infant less than 6 weeks old (for dogs) or 9 weeks old (for cats), obtain instruction from a veterinarian prior to proceeding with vaccinations.

(8) Due to an increased incidence of vaccine reactions in ferrets, all ferrets presenting for vaccination will be seen by a veterinarian. Other exotic animals may be seen at a veterinarian's discretion, but NO vaccinations will be administered as vaccines approved for these species are not available.

c. Microchips:

(1) Microchips will be placed in animals in accordance with manufacturer guidelines. With dogs, cats and other small mammals the microchip will be placed into the deep subcutaneous layer between the shoulder blades. In equines, the microchip will be placed within the nuchal ligament midway between the poll and withers.

(2) All dogs, cats, and horses housed on Fort Hood are required to have a microchip per FH REG 40-5.

d. Routine laboratory tests:

(1) Heartworm test

Dogs – All dogs over eight weeks of age should receive appropriate heartworm prophylaxis. Because the climate in central Texas is favorable for heartworm transmission all year, year-round prophylactic treatment is highly recommended. Testing is not useful for dogs younger than seven months of age. Dogs that are started on heartworm prophylaxis without a test prior to seven months of age must be tested at approximately one year of age before continuing on prophylaxis.

Thereafter annual retesting is required prior to refilling any prescriptions for heartworm prophylaxis.

Dogs older than seven months that have either never been on preventative or that have had a treatment lapse of greater than two days (for daily preventative products) or three months (for monthly preventative products) must be tested prior to beginning or resuming prophylaxis. Retesting is recommended (required for product warranty on many monthly preventative products) for these dogs three to four months after beginning or resuming preventative treatment, and is required at least annually prior to refilling any prescription for heartworm prophylaxis. When switching prophylaxis products, many product warranties require retesting at four and eight months

following the product change, and annually thereafter.

Heartworm testing will be performed using the antigen SNAP test. A blood smear will be examined to check for microfilaria in any animal testing positive on the SNAP test. Both of these tests will be performed as detailed in VTF SOP 27, Laboratory Specimen Collection and Submission Procedures.

Cats - Infection with adult worms in cats is estimated to occur at 5-15% of the rate for unprotected dogs in an area. Although most infections in cats tend to be transient

and asymptomatic, the potential exists for a small number of heartworms to cause life-threatening problems. Indoor cats should not be considered protected as mosquitoes may gain access to the house through open windows and doors. Both adult cats and kittens older than 8 weeks of age may be started on heartworm prophylaxis without first being tested. If a client wishes to have their cat tested for heartworms, both antigen and antibody tests are recommended. Currently the VTF does not have the capability to run these tests in-house. If desired, samples will be submitted to IDEXX for testing using the Feline Heartworm Panel protocol detailed in the IDEXX lab manual.

- (2). Fecal examination for parasites – A fecal floatation test will be utilized to check for the presence of nematode ova, while a direct smear will be utilized to check for the presence of Giardia trophozoites. If desired by the client or if indicated by clinical signs consistent with GI parasite infestation, these tests will be performed using the procedures detailed in VTF SOP 27, Laboratory Specimen Collection and Submission Procedures.
- (3) FeLV/FIV test - This test is required prior to primary vaccination of cats for feline leukemia virus. FeLV/FIV testing will be performed using the combination SNAP test as detailed in VTF SOP 27, Laboratory Specimen Collection and Submission Procedures.
- (4) Owners of dogs or cats over seven years of age should be advised of the benefits of regular geriatric examinations by a veterinarian complete with a CBC and serum chemistry evaluation.
- (5) Other laboratory tests may be recommended at the discretion of a veterinarian.

- c. Record all physical examination findings, procedures performed, test results, vaccinations administered, and medications dispensed using the AVImark system.

- d. Fort Hood VTF will not provide emergency care to POAs after business hours. Emergency care may be provided to POAs at the discretion of the veterinarian during normal business hours.
- e. Euthanasia Procedures:
 - (1) Euthanasia consultations will be scheduled either as the last appointment before lunch or as the last appointment of the day.
 - (2) Euthanasia is authorized only after written approval for this action is obtained from the animal owner on DD Form 1745, Animal Euthanasia. Charging for this service is at the discretion of the veterinarian performing the euthanasia. In general, charges will be waived for clients who have an established record with the VTF or who have records documenting appropriate treatment of their animal's terminal condition.
 - (3) Non-emergent euthanasia of a POA will be performed by a veterinarian. In case of an emergency when a veterinarian is not available in which immediate euthanasia is the only humane option, POA euthanasia may be performed by a military veterinary technician AFTER obtaining the necessary owner permission on DD Form 1745 and following a phone authorization by the VCO on call.
 - (4) Euthanasia will be accomplished in a humane manner using an approved euthanasia solution. A pre-anesthetic will be given before administering the euthanasia solution. If the owner elects to stay in the room during the euthanasia, a catheter will be placed in the animal's cephalic vein. If the owner does not want to stay in the room, the euthanasia solution may be administered by any appropriate and humane route.
 - (5) Owners presenting young, healthy animals for euthanasia that are otherwise adoptable WILL be refused service. Owners presenting animals with behavioral problems for euthanasia may be refused service at the discretion of the veterinarian if sufficient behavior modification therapy has not been attempted. Owners presenting stable animals with treatable medical conditions for euthanasia may be refused service at the veterinarian's discretion if appropriate medical treatment has not been attempted.
 - (6) Animal remains may be taken with the owner for burial or disposed by the VTF.
 - (7) All controlled drugs including Beuthanasia solution must be entered on DA Form 3949, Controlled Substance Record.

5. MEDICATIONS AND RESALE ITEMS:

- a. All prescription medications will be dispensed according to VTF SOP 07, Dispensing of Pharmaceuticals.
- b. Nonprescription resale items may be purchased at the discretion of the client without consultation with a veterinarian.